

Challenges and Opportunities for an ITS/Intermodal Freight Program



The Office of Intermodalism homepage [<http://www.dot.gov/intermodal.freight.html>] contains information on several activities that were -- or are being -- carried out to support pilot tests that deploy ITS technologies to facilitate the transport of intermodal freight. The files containing this information were entered in a pdf format, and you must use Adobe Acrobat to open them.

There are three major sets of files on this website, with a fourth to be added by late March. The three current sets of files contain information on:

- 1 Proceedings from six listening sessions conducted by USDOT during November and December of 1998 to solicit information on designing the ITS pilot tests;
- 2 A slide presentation on the National ITS/Intermodal Freight Program used during the listening sessions; and,
- 3 A final report on Challenges and Opportunities for an ITS/Intermodal Freight Program that proposes ways of linking public and private sector communication and information systems in transportation operations.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

These three sets of files have been compiled as resource material to support field tests of ITS technologies applied in the transport of intermodal freight. The fourth set of files, which will contain a Request for Applications for conducting these pilot tests, will be posted in March. These files should be considered as general overviews on the information and communication systems used in ITS programs and the intermodal industry, and are not intended for use as definitive, technical reports.

Title**Challenges and Opportunities for an ITS/Intermodal Freight Program****Purpose**

The purpose of this program is to develop and report on a proposed framework for pilot tests that link ITS technologies with private sector communication/information systems to facilitate the transport of intermodal freight in the U.S.

Content

The report addresses the following topics: trends and issues in the intermodal freight industry; analysis of the challenges to solving these issues; the federal government's role as a convener and catalyst to focus, coordinate, and accelerate the application of ITS technology by the intermodal industry and state and local transportation agencies; recommendations for initiating a national ITS/intermodal freight program; and examples of operational tests that could apply ITS technology and define the benefits to industry and government.

Findings

The report describes how operational tests could link public and private information and management systems, enabling terminal operators, freight carriers, and state and metropolitan traffic operations managers to share information to optimize flows and better utilize equipment and facilities. These tests would provide benefits to the intermodal industry, its clients, and the general public that all travel on the transportation system.

The report identifies three major steps in building a program that will serve industry, local, and national needs. The U.S. DOT should: 1) solicit and fund proposals for operational tests that will demonstrate the productivity and safety benefits of exchanging information between private sector shipment information and asset management systems and public sector traffic and safety management systems; 2) support ITS/intermodal forums, studies, and programs to advance private and public sector opportunities for accelerated application of ITS technology to the intermodal freight system; and 3) support the evolution of data interchange standards where they benefit industry and government.

Contractors

Cambridge Systematics, Inc. (prime contractor);

Vickerman Zachary Miller, a division of TranSystems Corporation (subcontractor);

North River Consulting Group (subcontractor).

Audience

Port, rail, truck, and air cargo terminal operators; shippers; freight forwarders and brokers; rail, waterborne, air, and motor carriers; third-party facilitators; receivers of cargo.

Port authorities; municipal and regional planning organizations; state and metropolitan agencies responsible for operating traffic management and traveler information systems; state commercial vehicle regulatory and enforcement agencies; local and regional emergency response agencies; operators of electronic toll collection systems; operators of weigh station clearance systems.

U.S. Department of Transportation; U.S. Department of Defense; U.S. Department of the Treasury.

ITS America; industry associations; Transportation Research Board; National Science and Technology Council; Logistics and Management Institute.

Prepared for

U.S. Department of Transportation - Office of the Secretary, Office of Intermodalism; and Federal Highway Administration, ITS Joint Program Office.

